this as a career simply starts to study with some mulla 874
who already has a position, and, when judged to have 793
shown proficiency, will begin to be supported by the
mosque. Others may study at the mosque-schools in Baghdad,
Damascus, or other cities, or even seek the famous Mosque
of al-Azhar in Cairo. In the first case, the student can
ultimately assist and replace his teacher, or the latter
may find him a congregation of his own, for there is an
exchange of information of this type between the religious
leaders of a given locale. The training itself consists
in reading the Quran and other devotional works, and
committing the necessary prayers and formulas to memory.
These tasks are by no means easy, and demand intellectual
gifts above the average. The "best" mullas are those able 793
to rehearse the entire Quran from memory, an exercise
which requires almost a day. The Quran, it might be noted, [557] ●
is not recited in ordinary tones, but chanted, the voice [598]
rising and falling in various cadences. Because much of
it is poetry, the tonal qualities of the words, the
imagery they convey, and a dramatic and melodious delivery
can elicit the strongest emotional responses in listeners.

Mullas are drawn almost exclusively from the ranks [565]
of the commoners, and no one in Rowanduz could think of a
case in which a member of the aristocracy had embraced such
a career. A pious chieftain, as his age and reputation for 792
sanctity increase, becomes known as a shaykh (Arabic, "old 756
man"), a title which is sometimes hereditary, but does not

At the noon
prayer on Friday many persons gather in the great mosque, 788
and between the second and third rak'as the mulla may deliver [537]
a short sermon, usually a stereotyped oration. The language
of both prayer and sermon is Arabic. It is difficult to [183]
say to what extent the townspeople are faithful to the re-
quirement of prayer, but an observably large number ignore
one or more of the five daily. Women often neglect their
prayers entirely. The tasbih or rosary has been mentioned
in the section treating dress, and may be used in devotional
exercises of a personal nature, for example, repetition of
prayers or the qualities of God. It is most often used to
occupy idle hands, however, the mind of the manipulator on
matters far divorced from religion.

In addition to prayer, a Muslim is expected to give 795
away part of his yearly earnings as alms. In the early 779
days of Islam these contributions were of two types, zakat,
a fixed proportion of the income, and sadaqat, optional
gifts. The zakat have been absorbed into the government
system of taxation, and the townspeople of Rowandus are
thus not held liable, outside of their usual taxes, to
enforced charity. Many free collections, sadaqat, however,
are made throughout the year, for example, aid for the
destitute Arab mentioned in the section treating society,
and contributions to these charities are regarded as acts
of piety. Another requirement is the duty of pilgrimage 788
to Mecca at least once during the believer's lifetime. In
spite of the high cost and the arduous character of the
journey, a surprising number of persons in the Rowandus